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Friday, 12 May 2000, 3.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Argentina	Ms. Moglia
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ag Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Scheffers
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/387)

00-42824 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/2000/387)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Austria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Portugal, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria), Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Satoh (Japan), Ms. Jarbussynova (Kazakhstan), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Monteiro (Portugal) and Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ivo Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the Mission in Tajikistan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Petrov to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan, document S/2000/387.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the Mission in Tajikistan, Mr. Ivo Petrov, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Petrov: Today the Security Council is discussing for the last time the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the implementation of the General Agreement for peace and national reconciliation in Tajikistan. The main provisions of the peace Agreement have been implemented, and the transition period came to an end with the holding of the first multi-party parliamentary elections and the first session of the new Parliament.

The positive outcome of the peace process in Tajikistan is attributable to three main factors: first, United Nations involvement from the very beginning of the hostilities in the country; secondly, the strong support of eight neighbouring States — especially the Russian Federation and Islamic Republic of Iran — that later became guarantors of the General Agreement and members of the Contact Group; and thirdly, but not least the political will of the two Tajik parties and their leadership to resolve differences through dialogue.

I want to begin with the first main factor, United Nations involvement. The United Nations was instrumental in assisting the negotiation process, which was conducted under its aegis. UNMOT was given a clear mandate by the Security Council, based on the General Agreement. The Security Council supported the Mission and responded positively to its needs whenever that was necessary.

The process of implementation of the provisions of the General Agreement was not free of serious crises. These were expected, as the level of suspicion and lack of confidence between former military opponents prevailed for a long time. Many times the work of the Commission on National Reconciliation was put on hold. However, all of these crises were resolved through the good offices of UNMOT, together with the Contact Group. Special mechanisms, such as ad hoc working groups chaired by the Mission and comprising representatives of both sides, were developed, and they performed efficiently.

The second factor is the contribution of the Contact Group States. The Contact Group of Guarantor States and international organizations conducted more than 130 meetings and played a most vital role as a crisis management mechanism. Throughout the transition period, the Contact Group maintained close working relations with all actors involved in the implementation of the provisions of the General Agreement, including the Government, the Commission on National Reconciliation and a number of international organizations. I would like to underline the fact that during the whole period of the functioning of the Contact Group, the interest of the peace process has always been the priority for the guarantor States.

The third factor is the contribution of the Tajik sides. The Government of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition made the most decisive contribution to the success of the peace process. President Rakhmonov and the leader of the United Tajik Opposition, Mr. Nuri, played a historic role in this regard. Both sides' goodwill and commitment to the achievement of peace and national accord in Tajikistan are an important guarantee for a viable peace in the country in the future. The 32 months taken to implement the General Agreement, as compared to the 12 to 18 months stipulated in the Agreement, ought not to detract from this achievement, given the adverse psychological effects of five years of civil war. Working together in the Commission on National Reconciliation created a new attitude for both sides towards the most vital problems of the country.

Despite the successful completion of the transitional period, the country is still facing a lot of problems. There are too many people in arms. The country is regarded by organized crime as a preferred transit route for drug trafficking to Europe. The situation in Afghanistan is a constant source of instability in the whole region. In view of these challenges, Tajikistan requires continued support from the international community for stabilization and post-conflict peace-building.

The key to maintaining peace and political stability in Tajikistan is sustained economic growth. Tajikistan remains the poorest Commonwealth of Independent States country, with an average monthly wage of less than $10. According to a recent World Bank/United Nations Development Programme Living Standards Survey, 80 per cent of the population suffers from extreme poverty. Recent poor harvests, the collapse of the social safety, public health, sanitation and educational systems has meant continued dependence on international assistance.

The country has received humanitarian assistance, and the figures for donor response to the appeal for 2000 are also encouraging: 28 per cent of the total requested, $34.8 million, has been pledged or committed. However, it must be stressed that the country needs not only humanitarian assistance; the problem of economic and social recovery and structural changes, including market reforms, requires significant international development assistance. This has been highly inadequate so far. Without international economic assistance, the viability of the political achievements might be endangered.

In the case of Tajikistan one can say that, in proportion to their accomplishments, the Tajik sides and the Tajik people have received less support than other States and peoples in a similar situation. This could be rectified through assistance for the new period of post-conflict stabilization in that country.

The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) could be regarded as a success story of United Nations peacekeeping. This was possible because of the factors I mentioned at the outset, but also because of the dedicated work of the people who have participated in the mission over the past five and a half years. I wish to stress here the highly professional work of my predecessors, the Special Envoys and Representatives for Tajikistan, Ismat Kittani, Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, Gerd Merrem and Jan Kubis, as well as heads of mission Liviu Bota and Darco Silovic. Commendation for work well done should be addressed to all members of the staff of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, both civilian and military, both international and local.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Ivo Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Tajikistan and head of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), for participating in today's meeting and, most important, for the work he and his colleagues are carrying out in Tajikistan.

Today's meeting of the Security Council and the statement which you, Mr. President, will be making at its conclusion are unusual events. They will aim at summing up the many United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Tajikistan, including the work of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, and at reaffirming the international community's unswerving support for the Tajik people on its difficult path to peace and national reconciliation.

Russia welcomes the success that has been achieved in the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Tajikistan. The implementation of the major provisions of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, signed on 27 June 1997 at Moscow under United Nations auspices, is an important achievement not only by the Tajik people but also by the United Nations. The success of the peace process was advanced by the activities of UNMOT, the Contact Group of guarantor States and international organizations, and donor States, which have played an extremely positive role at various stages of the inter-Tajik settlement process.

As Mr. Petrov has said, the basis of success has of course been the goodwill of the former parties to the conflict, their political courage, their realism and their ability to subordinate their own ambitions to the interests of the people. I wish, through the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Rashid Alimov, who is participating in today's meeting, to congratulate all Tajiks on this important gain, which will have defined the peaceful, democratic development of Tajik society.

Russia has played an active role at all stages of the inter-Tajik settlement process and, along with Iran and its Central Asian partners, has become one of the key guarantors of the implementation of the General Agreement. Russian peacekeepers within the collective peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), in close cooperation with UNMOT, have made a substantive contribution to stabilizing the situation, to promoting and ensuring the safety and security of United Nations and other international personnel in Tajikistan, to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to the implementation of the General Agreement.

Over the past several years, together with their Tajik colleagues, Russian border troops have carried out an important task, helping to stabilize the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border by raising a barrier to the illegal traffic in narcotic drugs and in weapons, and by putting an end to the activities of terrorists, extremists and other subversive elements from the territory of neighbouring Afghanistan.

We know that a great deal remains to be done to consolidate peace and stability in Tajikistan. We note with satisfaction that the report of the Secretary-General states that actions laid down in the General Agreement but not yet carried out in full will in fact be completed by the relevant Government organs. In that connection, we support such measures taken by the leadership of Tajikistan as the integration of former participants in the hostilities into the country's military structures and the removal from the population of weapons, ammunition and other illegal possessions.

Russia also supports recent measures by leaders of the Republic of Tajikistan to improve the situation in the country and in the Central Asian region as a whole. Together with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and our other CIS partners, we are ready to strengthen efforts to counter international terrorism and extremism.

We fully share the Secretary-General's conclusion that the international community should continue to provide support to Tajikistan, which has now embarked upon the enterprise of post-conflict peace-building. Here, we support the Secretary-General's intention to inform the Security Council of the objectives of a United Nations office for Tajikistan, to be established following the withdrawal of UNMOT upon the expiry of its mandate, on 15 May 2000. There should be no break in the United Nations presence in Tajikistan. In addition to the general aim of promoting the post-conflict social and economic rehabilitation of Tajikistan, the mandate of the new United Nations office should include such important elements as technical and financial assistance for the process of reintegrating former participants in the hostilities, completion of their demobilization, creation of civilian employment for former military personnel, disarmament of the population and the return of remaining refugees.

Today, as the Republic of Tajikistan embarks on a path leading to the ultimate establishment of civil accord and peace, Russia is ready to offer all possible assistance for post-conflict peace-building in Tajikistan.

Ms. Moglia (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine delegation wishes to welcome the way in which the situation in Tajikistan is being addressed. We thank Mr. Petrov for his briefing and we thank the Secretary-General for his report, document S/2000/387.

We want to say how pleased we are at the way in which the political process in Tajikistan has evolved since January 1993, when the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was established as a small political office in Dushanbe in the midst of the civil war that broke out immediately following Tajikistan's achievement of independence. The efforts of successive Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the

Secretary-General to promote inter-Tajik talks were productive and ultimately led to a ceasefire.

Subsequently, through the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan of June 1997, the Government and the opposition, as well as Tajik society as a whole, made clear their wish for peace and democracy.

The Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Mission also took part in this productive process. We should like to express our sincere gratitude to all of them.

We regret, however, that in consolidating this process there have been times of great difficulty for the security of UNMOT personnel. We have had to mourn the loss of six of its members. We should like to pay a special tribute to them. We should like to tell their families that their sacrifice was not in vain.

Furthermore, we are aware that the recent parliamentary elections were far from being perfect, that there are still many armed elements whose actions are beyond the control of the Government, that there are acute economic and social problems and that the instability in the region is contributing to the situation of insecurity.

Accordingly, we agree with the Secretary-General's comments, contained in his report, that the continued support of the international community in the post-conflict phase will be important for Tajikistan's ability to sustain and build on the achievements of the peace process. In this context, we await with great interest the proposal that will be sent to the Security Council relating to the possible establishment of a post-conflict peace-building office that will have the important and lofty objective of addressing the institutional, social and economic development of the country, within a framework of peace, democracy and respect for human rights. We believe that the presence in Tajikistan of the United Nations, whose work was essential and invaluable, will thus be guaranteed during this new stage of democratic consolidation.

In this spirit, we support the draft presidential statement that endorses the Secretary-General's plan to withdraw UNMOT when its mandate expires on 15 May and that encourages Member States and other interested parties to make voluntary contributions to projects for the social and economic recovery of the country.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): My delegation would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ivo Petrov, for his briefing and introduction of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2000/387.

I would like to make some brief comments on several areas. The first relates to elections. As my delegation commented on 21 March, the holding of parliamentary elections in Tajikistan on 27 February was a significant step forward in the democratic process. We are pleased to note that it was the first multi-party, pluralistic election in the history of Tajikistan. It included participation by former warring parties, and the fact that elections were held without violent incidents designed to halt the process was in itself a success.

Secondly, with regard to the integration of opposition fighters, we believe that in order to consolidate the peace process, the reintegration of ex-combatants into society should be given high priority. It cannot be viewed merely as a sequential event which will follow their disarmament. The two processes are intertwined. Positive results gained from the reintegration of the former combatants into society will mobilize those still holding on to arms and encourage them to surrender their weapons.

My third comment relates to the role of the Tajik Government, which should focus on consolidating the achievements already made. Elections are only a starting point in a long journey in the quest for national reconciliation and democratic institution-building. The Tajik Government, with the full support of the international community, should concentrate on carrying this process forward.

Fourthly, with regard to future United Nations engagement and the role of the international community, we have noted from the Secretary-General's report that he will be consulting the Tajik Government about the possible role of the United Nations in post-conflict peace-building and will inform the Council about the outcome of his consultations. It would be worthwhile for the Council to consider some viable and convincing options for the future involvement of the United Nations in Tajikistan.

Finally, with regard to the way ahead, the international community has a responsibility to see that the gains achieved in Tajikistan are not lost due to waning interest after the immediate crisis is over. It

should come forward with assistance to help the fledgling democracy take root and to create opportunities for the people to see hope in their future.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Security Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Turkmenistan in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan) took the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

Mr. Mohammad Kamal (Malaysia): Let me, at the outset, extend my delegation's warm welcome to Mr. Ivo Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan, and thank him for his very useful briefing. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his final report (S/2000/387) on the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT).

My delegation welcomes the significant achievements in the peace and reconciliation process in Tajikistan, as described by the Secretary-General in his report. We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Tajik leadership and people for their political will and the strong commitment that they have demonstrated to end the war in their country and pursue the path of peace and national accord. We strongly urge them to strive further, with determined effort, to strengthen and consolidate the achievements made thus far so that the peace process will be irreversible.

The United Nations, with the important support of the Contact Group and international organizations, in particular the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States Collective Peacekeeping Forces, has played a crucial role in the Tajik peace process. Some seven years of active involvement of the United Nations in Tajikistan has been recognized as a success, culminating in the successful conclusion of UNMOT's mandate. This is indeed a matter of great satisfaction to my delegation. At the same time, we note that this success has not been without price. We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Petrov and his predecessors, and to all the men and women of UNMOT, especially the Mission personnel who gave their lives in the service of peace in Tajikistan.

There is still a long way to go before peace can really endure in Tajikistan. The challenge of disarming armed elements that operate outside the Government's control, as well as the daunting economic and social problems, have yet to be fully and effectively overcome. We fully share the Secretary-General's assessment that continued international support for Tajikistan will remain necessary beyond the current transitional period. In this regard, we strongly support the Secretary-General's intention to establish a United Nations post-conflict peace-building office in Tajikistan, following the withdrawal of UNMOT, with the objective of consolidating peace and promoting democracy. We therefore look forward to the details on the establishment of that office.

Finally, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement that this Council will adopt following this meeting. We thank the Russian delegation for its initiative.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): The Council has an exceptionally busy agenda today and, in recognition of that fact, I will shorten my statement, though the Secretariat will distribute the full version. I should also like to associate my delegation with the statement that the Permanent Representative of Portugal will make later this afternoon on behalf of the European Union.

We are grateful to Special Representative Petrov for his briefing this afternoon. The road to peace in Tajikistan has not been easy. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was forced to act in volatile and dangerous circumstances, sadly losing six of its staff, and the political process continues to be difficult, with international observers declaring the recent parliamentary elections to be deeply flawed.

We must take this opportunity to congratulate UNMOT's leadership and staff for their excellent work. We should particularly remember those peacekeepers who gave their lives to the cause of peace in Tajikistan. We trust that the Government of Tajikistan will take steps to ensure the safety of those personnel who are to remain in the country.

We should not underestimate the task that faces the people and leaders of Tajikistan if they are to grasp this opportunity for lasting peace. The United Kingdom is pleased that the Secretary-General intends to establish a post-conflict peace-building office in Dushanbe. We hope that the office will incorporate a significant human rights capability. Respect for the human rights of the Tajik people, the building of strong democratic institutions and the enforcement of the rule of law are not optional extras. They are key elements to the future peace and stability of Tajikistan and their promotion should be at the core of the new office's role.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): I want to thank the Secretary-General for his report and Mr. Ivo Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the additional information.

My delegation welcomes the success achieved in the peace process in Tajikistan. We also commend the role played by the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and other parties. There is no doubt that their perseverance, often through difficult times, hugely contributed to the current positive state of affairs.

While acknowledging the overall success of the peace process, my delegation notes the difficulties that remain, in particular the existence of armed elements outside the control of the Government, which contributes to insecurity, as well as the daunting economic and social challenges. We hope that, in time, these problems can also be solved effectively.

My delegation is grateful for the excellent summary by the Secretary-General of the activities of UNMOT since its establishment. When reading through the report, I could not help drawing a parallel between difficulties experienced by that Mission, which achieved success, and missions currently under way, in particular in Africa. There is a clear message that, with perseverance by all parties, a mission can be successful, despite the existence of numerous and protracted difficulties.

Even more striking for my delegation are the characteristics cited that contributed to the overall positive outcome of the Mission. These include the early engagement of the United Nations in the conflict; the sustained political support of the Security Council and interested member States in the region; cooperation with other organizations; effective crisis management; and the clear will of the people of the country to end the war and pursue a political solution.

It seems that if these requirements could be met by the United Nations and the international community as a whole, other peace efforts could also succeed. What is required is the political will of all the parties concerned.

Finally, I would like to join the Secretary-General in paying tribute to the men and women who served in UNMOT and we look forward to his opinion about the possible establishment of a post-conflict peace-building office in Tajikistan. Furthermore, we support the draft presidential statement that was submitted by the Russian delegation.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): The exhaustive report which has just been presented to us by Mr. Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General — whom we wish to thank, along with all the members of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), for their efforts — marks the last of a series devoted to the situation in Tajikistan and the activities of UNMOT.

I take this opportunity to associate myself with preceding delegations in welcoming the successful culmination of the peace process in Tajikistan. The success of this process was the result of the will demonstrated by the Tajik parties. We hail their resolve to overcome the obstacles they encountered throughout this period. Despite the repeated crises that threatened the process, this determination allowed the conclusion of a series of agreements, crowned by the signing of the General Agreement of 1997.

While noting with satisfaction the highly important role of the United Nations in the comprehensive implementation of the main provisions of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, I should like to pay due tribute to the various protagonists who participated, either on site or at a distance, in the peace process in Tajikistan and its consolidation. In particular, we wish to thank the officials and staff of UNMOT, military and civilian alike, who often worked in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions with the assistance of others, such as the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe mission and the Commonwealth of Independent States collective peacekeeping forces. In that context, we pay homage to the memory of those who fell in the service of peace in Tajikistan.

With the withdrawal of UNMOT and the expiration of its mandate on 15 May 2000, the support of the international community will be extremely important and remain indispensable if Tajikistan is to continue on the path of peace and national reconciliation. We attach particular importance to this post-conflict phase, for the situation in Tajikistan remains fragile because of domestic and external factors alike, which can be a source of instability and the resurgence of violence. We urge all the parties to persevere to ensure that the gains made since 1993 are consolidated within the framework of the new United Nations office, which will work for the consolidation of peace and the social and economic restoration of Tajikistan.

Mr. Minton (United States): The United States concurs with the Secretary-General's assessment that the process which the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was created to support is now over. With the recent violence-free parliamentary elections, the transition set forth in the peace accords has been completed.

We agree that UNMOT should be formally terminated upon expiration of its current mandate on 15 May 2000. For this achievement, we wish to congratulate Special Representative Petrov and the staff of UNMOT. We are aware of the sacrifices made by UNMOT personnel, recognizing in particular that some gave their lives for this cause, and we feel the deepest gratitude for their contributions.

My delegation now hopes that the Government of Tajikistan will build on the successful work of UNMOT by taking further steps to consolidate the gains of the peace process. It is particularly important that the emerging democratic institutions of Tajikistan be nurtured and solidified, so that all groups within the country have a voice and a stake in the political process.

Although the recent elections constituted a significant step towards democracy, they were marked by serious flaws and cannot fully be characterized as free, fair and transparent. The process of reconciliation among various political and social groups in Tajikistan is still far from complete. The United States therefore believes that the closure of the peacekeeping mission should by no means signify an end to the international community's engagement with Tajikistan and that support for the peace process there must continue.

We concur that there is a need for the establishment of a small follow-on United Nations mission to support peace-building and further national reconciliation. We welcome further discussion of the follow-on mission, and we are open to ideas and suggestions as to how it can best be organized, staffed and administered. We anticipate that this mission will build effectively on the accomplishments of UNMOT.

The United States looks forward to working with the international community and with the Government and people of Tajikistan in bringing about full national reconciliation and stability in that country.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): We would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Petrov, for his briefing, as well as his excellent work in the field.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), which is a proud achievement, and particularly gratifying at this time in light of the current difficulties we face in Sierra Leone. While the two missions are, of course, very different, both in scope and complexity, UNMOT's contribution to the peace process in Tajikistan does demonstrate that the United Nations has an important role to play in helping Member States overcome security crises that imperil security, so that they may embark on the path to peace, national reconciliation and democracy.

Canada salutes the valiant efforts of the men and women of UNMOT for their important work under very difficult and often dangerous conditions. We pay tribute to those members who gave their lives in the service of peace in Tajikistan. We wish to express our sympathy to the bereaved families. As the Secretary-General noted in his report earlier this month, their sacrifice must not be forgotten. A fitting memorial will be the continuation of the United Nations involvement in Tajikistan to support national efforts to build a peaceful and stable country, rooted in respect for human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance.

Canada looks forward to the Secretary-General's proposal for the post-conflict peace-building office, which should include a component focusing on the promotion and protection of human rights. The international community must remain actively involved in helping address the range of political, economic, social and human rights issues affecting the country.

Canada supports the presidential statement.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Tajikistan, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ivo Petrov, for his briefing.

Jamaica applauds the resolution of the conflict and the establishment of peace in Tajikistan. This is an important step towards achieving stability in Central Asia. We commend the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for the implementation of its mandate, in accordance with the 1997 Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan.

The Mission has reached a successful conclusion. We wish to acknowledge the contribution of the Secretary-General and his Special Representatives, and of those countries and international organizations which supported the peace efforts of the United Nations. We also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to those who gave their lives in the cause of peace.

The commitment of the Tajik people and Government to the creation of a pluralistic democracy is clear. The country is now well on the road to peace and national reconciliation, and the international community must support the efforts of the Government aimed at economic, political and military reforms. Existing political institutions must be strengthened in order to ensure the creation of a sustainable system of governance in collaboration with the Tajik people.

We believe that the United Nations must remain involved in order to cement the gains made in the peace process, to foster greater democracy in the region and to ensure that continuing instability does not jeopardize the peace achieved.

My delegation therefore welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a post-conflict peace-building mission following the withdrawal of UNMOT. While United Nations programmes and agencies in Tajikistan will have new priorities, they will have a crucial role to play in the years ahead. The long-term economic and social development of Tajikistan must be addressed by strengthening local institutions and through capacity-building. Humanitarian activities must continue to be given prominence. Increased emphasis must now be placed on ensuring the return of refugees from neighbouring countries and internally displaced persons to their places of origin, as well as on the reintegration of ex-combatants. But if United Nations personnel are to operate effectively, their security must be assured and not threatened by armed elements operating outside of the control of the Government.

In conclusion, I wish to express my delegation's support for the presidential statement initiated by the Russian Federation.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): My delegation is grateful to Mr. Petrov, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his informative briefing on the latest developments in Tajikistan and the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT).

In March the Security Council agenda focused on the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan that had been held in February. On a very positive note, Council members maintained that the elections were held on a multi-party and pluralistic basis. During the elections, the people of Tajikistan rose to the challenge of peace and democracy by accepting the democratic standards of governance. We are all aware that the elections brought new capacities and new perspectives to the movement towards long-term stability in that country.

We believe that the Government and people of Tajikistan, in line with this democratic choice, will continue to seek a way forward that provides for development of democratic institutions. Even more importantly, it must be accompanied by progress on economic and social reforms in the country.

The progress that the parties to the peace process in Tajikistan have made is most evident in the post-conflict peace-building. We are pleased to note that the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) in Tajikistan is broadly recognized as a success. In three days the Mission will cease to exist. The more than seven years of its dedicated operation in the country have testified to the sincere desire of the international community to bring peace and reconciliation to this country.

The road to peace and reconciliation in Tajikistan has not been a smooth one. It was marked by periods of uncertainty and grave crises. However, the Government and political parties of Tajikistan demonstrated their commitment to the peace agreement, solved their differences through dialogue, overcame many obstacles and eventually embarked on the path towards the peace and democracy.

As the Secretary-General rightly stresses in the report, the support of the Security Council was decisive in helping UNMOT through difficult times. My delegation pays tribute to the Contract Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations for the effort it made to maintain a political dialogue between the Tajik parties. We would also like to commend the UNMOT staff members for their dedicated work during these years. This work ensured the successful implementation of the task entrusted to them by the international community. We are proud of the fact that Ukrainian nationals made a real contribution to the successful work of the Mission. We pay special tribute to those Mission members who gave their lives in the service of peace in Tajikistan.

The tasks that face Tajik society today are no less important then those of the previous period. A major challenge now is to consolidate peace and promote democracy. International support during this very challenging period will be of particular value to that country. We are convinced that the Organization should provide assistance to the consolidation of democracy in Tajikistan. We anticipate that the implementation of the provisions set forth in General Assembly resolution 54/96 A, "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan", will receive new impetus in the new, secure environment in Tajikistan.

In this context we welcome the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General in drawing the attention of the international community to the current humanitarian issues in Tajikistan and in mobilizing international assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country's economy.

We support the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations post-conflict peace-building office in Tajikistan. We believe that cooperation between the future office and other international agencies in Tajikistan and with the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe will be of great importance for the democratic development of Tajik society.

I also would like to support the draft presidential statement proposed be the Russian Federation.

Mr. Ag Oumar (Mali) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank Mr. Ivo Petrov, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), for presenting the report of the Secretary-General. My delegation deeply appreciates the way in which he guided the mandate of UNMOT.

The Security Council will recall that, last 21 March, when it considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan contained in document S/2000/214, it believed that the holding of the first pluralist parliamentary elections would mark a major step forward in the process of democratization and national reconciliation. The expiration of the mandate of UNMOT had then been announced for 15 May — that is, three days from now.

The report of the Secretary-General in document S/2000/387 — which is the last of the series and which has been submitted for our consideration — reports on the completion of the electoral process which paved the way for peace in Tajikistan. Thus the two chambers of the newly elected parliament held their first joint session on 27 April. The election of candidates to the 33 seats of the National Assembly, the upper house, was held as scheduled on 23 March, and, in accordance with the Constitution, 25 deputies were elected by local assemblies and 8 were appointed by the President. The Commission on National Reconciliation was formally dissolved by presidential decree as from 1 April.

To reach this stage, the United Nations has travelled a long road, but, as it is said, "all's well that ends well". However, the international community should not rest on its laurels; the way ahead is still long and full of obstacles. The reintegration of the opposition into the political life of the country is a major achievement; however, parliamentary elections, in the view of international observers, were marred by serious irregularities, and armed elements are continuing to operate beyond the control of the Government, thus contributing to a climate of insecurity. The country has been experiencing enormous economic and social problems. A resurgence of instability cannot be ruled out on account of both domestic factors and the unstable situation throughout the region.

Tajikistan is entering a new phase of its history and needs the support of the international community more than ever to pursue and complete the peace process and to secure the outcome.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a United Nations office which would be entrusted with peace-building and would facilitate an ongoing search for solutions to the problems of

institutional, social and economic development in a consistent fashion, in order to strengthen peace and promote democracy in Tajikistan.

My delegation would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan, who is here today, and we would like to express our satisfaction with the unstinting cooperation that the Tajik people and Government provided. It allowed UNMOT to achieve its mandate. I also note the Contact Group's support of these efforts.

My delegation also thanks the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, the military observers and the men and women who participated in this Mission often under difficult conditions.

Finally, my delegation would like to pay tribute to those who fell in the service of peace for mankind, and we present our condolences to their families. My delegation will support the Russian Federation's proposed statement, which will authorize the expiration of UNMOT's mandate. We thank that delegation for this work.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I will now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

The Chinese delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Tajikistan. Our thanks also go to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Petrov, for his briefing.

At the outset I would like to express my congratulations for the success achieved in the peace process in Tajikistan and by the United Nations peacekeeping operation in that country. This success shows that the practical implementation of the peace agreement and the success of the United Nations peacekeeping operation have depended on the political will of the Tajik Government and other parties concerned. They have also depended on the strong support of the international community. We express our profound appreciation to the United Nations, the Contact Group, the Russian Federation and other parties concerned for their efforts.

As the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) comes to an end, we would like to pay special tribute to the successive Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for their contributions.

We salute UNMOT for the important role it has played in promoting national reconciliation in Tajikistan, especially those who gave their lives for the cause of peace in Tajikistan.

We support the intention of the Secretary-General to hold consultations with the Tajik Government with a view to agreeing as soon as possible on the establishment of the United Nations post-conflict peace-building office in Tajikistan.

As a friendly neighbour of Tajikistan, China will continue to contribute to the economic rehabilitation and social development of Tajikistan.

In closing, the Chinese delegation supports the draft presidential statement to be adopted by the Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Tajikistan.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*interpretation from Russian*): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to say that my delegation is extraordinarily gratified to see you, an outstanding representative of the People's Republic of China — a great State that is a neighbour and friend of Tajikistan — presiding over this meeting of the Security Council, which is an important and truly historic meeting for my country. Your diplomatic experience and talent provide all grounds for confidence in the successful work of the Council under your leadership this month.

Allow me to express our satisfaction at the highly substantive discussion that has just taken place on the final report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan and at the valuable comments made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan, Mr. Ivo Petrov. They provide much food for thought and serve as guidelines for further action.

We are deeply grateful to all members of the Council for the wishes they have addressed to the people and Government of Tajikistan in their sincere desire to see us achieve a lasting peace and flourish in stable democratic development in the post-conflict peace-building period.

My delegation would like to thank all members of the Security Council for their genuine and warm interest, as expressed in their statements, in a further

strengthening of the success achieved during the peace process. We are particularly inspired by the fact that the members of the Council have once again shown their solidarity with Tajikistan and its efforts to move towards building a democratic and secular State of law.

It is appropriate today to recall the situation that existed when, more than seven years ago — on 21 January 1993 — the United Nations, on the request of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, began its peacekeeping activity in our country by opening its small political mission in Dushanbe. During that period, the merciless flames of internal conflict were raging throughout the country. In conditions of what was essentially a civil war, the moral and psychological atmosphere of society was poisoned by the venom of enmity and mutual distrust. The situation on the Tajik-Afghan border was critical. There were almost daily violations, accompanied by casualties. All of this continued to grow.

Forces linked to international terrorism, religious extremism, illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs and weapons and other criminal activities attempted to exploit this set of circumstances. A real danger emerged that threatened Tajikistan's very existence as an independent and sovereign State and its territorial integrity. We faced a clear and ever-increasing threat to regional stability and security. It was no easy task to find the only reasonable formula, the only correct path to peace.

Against that backdrop, on 5 April 1994 at Moscow, under the aegis of the United Nations, a difficult inter-Tajik dialogue began. That dialogue continued for 1,171 days. In the course of over three years, the incredibly complex negotiating process first led to the conclusion, on 17 September 1994 at Tehran, of the Agreement on a Temporary Ceasefire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country for the Duration of the Talks. Ultimately, that led to the signing at Moscow, on 27 June 1997, of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan.

The length of that period meant that the path we followed was genuinely one that lasted an entire epoch. As a direct party to that process, I can attest to the fact that those were years of intensive, constructive and collective work dedicated to the achievement of a most noble objective: the restoration — with the assistance of the international community — of peace and tranquillity to the land of Tajikistan.

The venues for the holding of negotiations changed: Moscow, Tehran, Islamabad, Ashgabat, Almaty and Bishkek. The members of the delegations of the Tajik sides changed, as did the intermediaries who were acting on behalf of the Secretary-General. However, what remained unchanged was the goal: overcoming all obstacles to find the road that led to peace, stability and democracy in Tajikistan. The path from armed confrontation to national reconciliation was long and onerous, but it turned out to be the only correct path that was in fact consonant with the fundamental interests of Tajik society.

The long-awaited hope for the restoration of peace to the land of Tajikistan returned with the conclusion of the Moscow General Agreement, and once again the highest national priorities were proclaimed to be cooperation and the unity of all citizens regardless of their nationality, religious faith or political allegiance. The gloomiest chapter in the tragic modern history of our country was closed, and the Republic entered a new era.

Enormous credit for this goes to the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the leaders of the former United Tajik Opposition, which demonstrated the capacity to raise their sights, transcend the interests of the moment and direct their political will at resolving issues that directly affected the fate of the Tajik people.

The President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, headed the peace process with personal courage, goodwill, political insight and organizational ability. To this day, he remains the major driving force of the process, while relying on the support of the absolute majority of the population of the country.

The long journey to national reconciliation begun seven years ago under the aegis of the United Nations has today reached its logical conclusion. All of the key provisions of the General Agreement have been implemented. The major functions of the Commission on National Reconciliation, which was established in accordance with the Agreement, have been carried out.

The United Tajik Opposition has announced the disbanding of its armed units, which has become one of the most important stages in the implementation of the Protocol on Military Issues. Some 7,000 former fighters of the opposition have had the appropriate registration carried out. More than 6,000 have been integrated into the military forces of the Republic, and the others have been demobilized and have returned to civilian life.

For the most part, the process provided for by the general amnesty has been completed. Agreed amendments have been made to our fundamental law, the Constitution of the Republic, through the national referendum. A Government for the country has now been formed on a broad national political basis with the participation of representatives of the former armed opposition. Through a direct secret ballot, on an alternative basis, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan has been elected.

Taking into account the amendments made to the Constitution of the country, for the first time in the modern history of Tajikistan there have been multi-party, pluralist elections for the Republic's organs of legislative power. As a result of this, a bi-cameral parliament has been formed and has begun its work. One of the major achievements of the inter-Tajik settlement was that virtually all of the approximately 52,000 refugees in Afghanistan returned to their homes, and more than 180,000 returned from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as more than 680,000 internally displaced persons.

It is well known that during the many years of armed confrontation more than 50,000 perished, and the total value of material losses, in an already poor country, amounted to more than $7 billion. This was compounded by the requirements for the settling, psychological adaption and full-fledged integration into the social, economic and political life of the country of these refugees and displaced persons, who accounted for nearly one fifth of the population of the country. These circumstances further aggravated an already critical economic and social situation in Tajikistan. The restoration of destroyed social and cultural sites, the revival and reform of the economy of the country, the strengthening of State institutions, the establishment of social conditions conducive to a dignified life for each member of society — all of that, along with the objectives of achieving a political settlement, was the daily concern of the Government of the country.

It is understandable that Tajikistan, acting alone, could not cope with these and other enormous problems. Comprehensive international assistance and support played a critically important role in overcoming the crisis phase of the development of Tajik society. The United Nations can rightfully and proudly chalk up as a peacekeeping success its assistance to Tajikistan in achieving a political settlement to the armed conflict and in resolving the humanitarian and socio-economic problems of the country.

With the support and assistance of the international community in Tajikistan, the bases began to be laid down for building a modern, democratic State of law with a socially focused market economy. A philosophy of peace and constructive thinking won out over a philosophy of enmity and destruction.

Today in Tajikistan the reign of peace is becoming ever stronger. The Government and the people of my country are deeply and fully aware of the plethora of extraordinarily complex difficulties facing them, and in resolving them we are counting on the continuing noble support of the international community. The success, achieved through the assistance of the United Nations of achieving a peaceful life has enhanced confidence on the part of ordinary people of Tajikistan in the United Nations and raised it to new heights. To maintain that confidence without dashing the hopes of these people is something the Organization can do only by reasserting its authority through specific actions designed to strengthen peace and stability in our country.

We have responded with gratitude to the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations office to assist in post-conflict peace-building in Tajikistan. I am confident that the new United Nations office will also meet with a positive response from the Government and the people of Tajikistan, who are looking to it for energetic coordination of international efforts to bring about the social and economic rehabilitation of the country. We are convinced that the provision of carefully targeted assistance to Tajikistan by the international community will play an important role in assisting the strengthening of peace and stability throughout the entire region of Central Asia.

Today's meeting provides us with an outstanding opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to all of those who have made contributions to the cause of peace in Tajikistan. These are first and foremost the more than 40 States that have been members of the Security Council during the years of the Council's consideration of the issue of Tajikistan. Thanks to the unfailing and constant attention of members of the Council, it has been possible to design the major parameters and coordinated actions of the international community for successfully moving the peace process in our country forward. Superb professional and human qualities were demonstrated in this respect both by the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and by his colleague who is now the highest official of the Organization, Mr. Kofi Annan.

I should also like to mention all of the Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and leaders of the United Nations groups and missions who dedicated their talents and in fact gave themselves body and soul to the cause of peace in Tajikistan: Liviu Bota, Ismat Kittani, Ramiro Píriz-Ballón, Darko Silovic, Gerd Dietrick Merrem, Ján Kubiš and Ivo Petrov, who is participating in our meeting today.

Separate mention should be made of the staff members of the United Nations Secretariat who dealt daily with and successively resolved the complex problems involved in Tajikistan. We are grateful to all States — and there are some 30 of them — that sent their staff members to the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, staff members who demonstrated outstanding professionalism, courage and self-abnegation in carrying out their duties.

To our great regret, there were also tragic losses. Four citizens of Austria, Poland, Uruguay and Japan gave their lives for the cause of peace in Tajikistan. Their names will for ever remain in our hearts and in the memory of the Tajik people.

Impressive work was also carried out in Tajikistan by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, and the agency she heads. To a great extent they were responsible for the restoration of some 29,500 of nearly 38,000 homes destroyed during the course of the hostilities, for the finding of jobs for 133,000 of 140,000 families that suffered from the war and for the return of virtually all of the illegally occupied houses to their former owners.

A great contribution was made to alleviate the drastic problems facing Tajikistan, and active work is continuing in our country on the part of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the International Financial Corporation.

The efforts of the United Nations to restore peace and stability in Tajikistan were actively promoted by other international organizations as well, in particular the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and also other friendly guarantor States for the implementation of the General Agreement — Russia, Iran, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan. All of these States and organizations, which were part of the Contact Group, served as reliable guarantors of the implementation of the General Agreement. The experience of the work of this group will no doubt be applicable and useful in the settlement of other crisis situations.

We wish to single out Russia among those States, and to convey our special gratitude for its decisive contribution to all stages of the inter-Tajik settlement process.

Russian military personnel, moreover, were the backbone of the collective peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which from 1993 to the present have been playing an important stabilizing role in our country. Russian border troops, who at the request of the Government of Tajikistan are serving on the Tajik-Afghan border, are demonstrating sterling qualities, carrying out their duties in a selfless, highly professional way through the difficult years when they protected Tajikistan from infiltration from neighbouring Afghanistan, which was torn apart by conflict, terrorism, criminal elements, drugs and weapons. Our peoples will never forget the Russian peacekeepers and border troops who laid down their lives in the cause of the security and stability of both Russia and Tajikistan.

The people and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan are overjoyed and highly elated that, with the support of the entire international community, it has been possible for us, at the turn of a new millennium, to break the vicious circle of fratricidal enmity and to channel the development of our State and our society into a civilized course of peace, democracy and a flourishing society.

In Tajik society today there is growing confidence that Tajikistan possesses all the components of a modern, democratic, economically viable State. The rich, centuries-old history of the Tajik people, the vast intellectual and spiritual heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestors, and our enormous human potential are an earnest of that.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Tajikistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

As the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) comes to an end, the European Union would like to put on record its satisfaction and appreciation at the important role played by the mission, supported by the Contact Group of guarantor States and international organizations, in assisting the parties in the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in TaJikistan.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Tajikistan and welcome his positive assessment of the role played by the United Nations. In particular, we take note of his analysis of the factors that contributed to the overall success of the mission, namely the early engagement of the United Nations, the sustained political support of the Security Council, cooperation with other organizations, effective crisis management and, above all, the clear will of the parties to end the conflict and pursue a political solution. These are important lessons for the United Nations, which are applicable beyond Tajikistan.

A key factor in the peace process in Tajikistan has been the reintegration of the opposition into the political life of Tajikistan: a sine qua non for national reconciliation and the strengthening of the democratic process. This is why the European Union was particularly disturbed by the undemocratic events and procedures that took place in connection with the presidential elections in November 1999 and by the seriously flawed recent parliamentary elections. The ultimate success of the peace process will depend on national reconciliation and a functioning democratic society based on the rule of law. The European Union strongly supports the peace process in Tajikistan and links the future development of contractual relations between the European Union and Tajikistan to it.

In the context of the need for the continued support of the international community in the post-conflict phase in Tajikistan to sustain and advance the peace process, the European Union looks forward to the proposals of the Secretary-General with regard to the possible establishment there of a United Nations office charged with addressing institutional, social and economic development in an integrated manner in order to consolidate peace and promote democracy. The European Union stresses, in this regard, the importance of a human rights component.

The European Union would also like to emphasize its appreciation for the contribution of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to the peace process in Tajikistan. After the withdrawal of UNMOT the OSCE mission will remain on the ground and continue to assist Tajikistan on its path towards democracy.

The European Union joins the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council in paying tribute to the men and women who served in UNMOT and thanking them very sincerely for their selfless efforts, which in certain cases involved paying the ultimate price: their lives.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for providing us with this opportunity to present our views on the situation in Tajikistan at this special moment when the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has successfully completed its mandate.

Japan fully agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that with the completion of UNMOT's mandate, the democratization process in Tajikistan has to move on to a new stage. There is no doubt that continued United Nations involvement is indispensable in the coming years in order to consolidate the achievement made so far. Japan therefore supports the establishment of a post-conflict peace-building office in Tajikistan.

I would like to pay high tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ivo Petrov, as well as to the former Special Representative, Mr. Jan Kubis, for their tireless efforts, which have greatly contributed to the progress to date in the democratization of Tajikistan.

At the same time, let us not forget the invaluable contributions made by all the UNMOT staff members, particularly those who have given their lives for peace and democracy in Tajikistan. In all, eight United Nations staff members lost their lives during UNMOT's

deployment. The victims include Professor Yutaka Akino, a renowned Japanese scholar of Central Asia, who was brutally murdered in July 1998 while serving as a political officer of UNMOT. His devotion to the cause of peace in Tajikistan has become a legend among the people of Japan.

That Tajikistan's first democratic parliamentary elections were held in a relatively peaceful atmosphere with multi-party participation was no doubt an important step towards the realization of democracy. Having extended approximately $150,000 in financial assistance to the electoral observer mission deployed by the United Nations and the UNMOT voter education project, and also having sent a mission to monitor the election held in February, Japan shares a sense of achievement with the Government and the people of Tajikistan and indeed with all those concerned with UNMOT.

But we have to acknowledge the fact that certain shortcomings still remain in the electoral system, as pointed out in the Secretary-General's report. These include a lack of transparency in the voter registration process and ambiguities pertaining to the independence of the election administration. We would like to urge the Tajik Government to learn lessons from recent experiences and to improve the electoral system.

It is evident that the Government and the people of Tajikistan will have to solve many problems in order to make further advances in their political, economic and social development. The demobilization, disarmament and reintegration into society of former soldiers is particularly important for the stability of Tajikistan, whose democracy is still fragile.

We believe that, in solving these problems, Tajikistan needs greater attention and support from the international community. For its part, Japan has been extending cooperation to the country's efforts — for example, by hosting a seminar on democracy and good governance in 1999, receiving Tajik trainees and contributing to the United Nations Development Programme rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programme. I want to assure the Council that Japan will continue to help Tajikistan in its nation-building efforts.

Let me conclude by appealing to both the Government of Tajikistan and the international community to renew their determination at this important juncture to work together to further advance democratization, national reconciliation and economic development in Tajikistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Austria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I have the honour to speak in my capacity as the representative of the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Like previous speakers, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Ivo Petrov, for the excellent report and for the successful work accomplished by the United Nations Mission in Tajikistan.

Since Austria acceded to the chairmanship of the OSCE at the beginning of this year, Central Asia has become a major priority of the organization's work. To this end, the OSCE Secretary General, Ján Kubiš, was appointed Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the region this January. In the meantime, Mr. Kubiš has met with the Presidents and Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. His expertise as former Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Tajikistan and Head of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) is an enormous asset which enabled the OSCE to enter into a substantial, action-oriented dialogue, not only with Dushanbe but also with Astana, Bishkek, Ashgabat and Tashkent.

Let me now say a few words about the OSCE Mission to Tajikistan. It was established at the 1993 Rome Ministerial Council meeting. Today, apart from the main office in Dushanbe, there are field offices in Kurgan-Tyube, Shaartuz, Dusti, Garm and, since February, Khujand. In this context, I would like to pay tribute to the untiring efforts of the current Head of the Mission, Ambassador Buhoara.

The Mission received a broad and flexible mandate to support political reconciliation, democracy-building and respect for human rights. Much of the Mission's work is focused on the human dimension. The range of activities covers human rights monitoring and support for the establishment of democratic institutions, free media and civil society. The mandate also provides for assistance in legislative reform and the establishment of the rule of law, as well as support for gender equality programmes.

I would also like here to commend the excellent cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations in monitoring the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, concluded on 27 June 1997. In this context, both the OSCE and the United Nations served as observers in the elections. Although concerns had been raised regarding the independence of the media and election commissions, as well as the transparency of the counting and tabulation procedures, the elections are undoubtedly a significant step forward in the process of democratization.

Today, the main goals of the peace Agreement, namely, to establish peace and security and to enable national reconciliation, have been accomplished, as was pointed out by the representative of Tajikistan. On 31 March, the OSCE Troika welcomed the formal end of the transition period and the implementation of the General Agreement on Peace as an important benchmark in the process of national reconciliation and a move towards implementing reforms.

There are still many issues in the transformation process in Tajikistan which need further improvement: the democratization process, the human rights situation, the freedom of the media, the refugee situation, the establishment of civil society, the fight against organized crime and the support for economic transformation, which is very important. In his keynote speech at the Eighth OSCE Economic Forum in April, President Rakhmonov highlighted the many economic challenges which Tajikistan is facing.

In addition to the political and economic challenges, there are also environmental issues. The Istanbul OSCE Summit Declaration highlighted the risks of potential conflicts arising from environmental issues, in particular transboundary water issues, in Central Asia. Regional management of transboundary water resources can be a tool for promoting cooperation and improving economic and social development. The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Austrian Foreign Minister, Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner, has taken up a proposal of the British Foreign Minister to intensify the dialogue among the Central Asian States with regard to these issues. The need of Central Asian States to accept responsibility for these problems and to seek solutions through regional cooperation will be emphasized.

The OSCE values the efforts of both Tajik sides and the achievements made so far. As has just been pointed out by the representative of the European Union, after the termination of UNMOT, the OSCE will be the focal point for the efforts of the international community in assisting Tajikistan. In this respect, the OSCE hopes to continue the excellent cooperation with UNDP, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. A good example of this cooperation is the fight against international terrorism, violent extremism, organized crime and drug and arms trafficking. In October, the OSCE, together with the Vienna-based United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, will organize a conference in the region. This conference will address the complex interrelationships between drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism, with special emphasis on the rule of law, good governance and human rights.

In conclusion, I should like to inform the members of the Council that Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner, the Austrian Foreign Minister and Chairperson-in-Office, intends to visit Tajikistan in the near future to determine how the OSCE can further help in the transformation process. I can assure the Council that the Austrian Chair will spare no effort to strengthen the cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations in our common goal to assist Tajikistan and its people.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Kazakhstan. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Jarbussynova (Kazakhstan): First of all, I would like to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this open meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in Tajikistan.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would also like to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report on the efforts of the United Nations in the settlement of the conflict in that country. We agree with one of the main conclusions of the report that the early engagement of the United Nations in the conflict; sustained political support of the Security Council and interested Member States in the region; cooperation with other international organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and the clear will of the people and the President of Tajikistan have put an end to hostilities and brought about the political solution of this crisis.

The recent elections to Parliament, held for the first time in Tajikistan on a multi-party basis, with the participation of a greater number of citizens and a pluralistic character, testified to the consolidation of Tajik society. We share the views, expressed by Member States during the meeting of the Security Council in March, that the elections played a significant role in advancing the democratic development of Tajikistan and building a civil society in that country. In our view, the newly elected bicameral Parliament, which has already convened its first session, will be one of the main instruments in moving the country forward towards progress, democracy and prosperity.

The report of the Secretary-General presents a bright and impressive picture of the important developments which preceded the establishment of peace in Tajikistan, emphasizing efforts to reach a ceasefire agreement and to solve existing problems through the political dialogue established with the help from the States of the region.

One ought to pay tribute to the staff of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), who, in difficult situations and sometimes sacrificing their lives, ensured the success of the Mission. A significant contribution to and support for the peace process were offered by the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations and the collective peacekeeping and border forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Stability in Tajikistan is of great importance not only to the Tajik people, but also to the peoples of the whole region. As a member of the Contact Group, Kazakhstan has made every effort to promote a peaceful settlement in Tajikistan. The border force unit of Kazakhstan has been guarding the frontiers of the Commonwealth in Tajikistan.

The Central Asian States are deeply concern by the unstable situation in the region, notably in neighbouring Afghanistan, as mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. Therefore, issues of regional security were among the main topics of the First Eurasian Economic Summit, recently held under the auspices of the World Economic Forum in Almaty.

The delegation of Kazakhstan is confident that the efforts to strengthen security undertaken by the countries of the region in various formats — including the Conference for Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the "Shanghai Five" and the agreement on joint action against terrorism, political and religious extremism, transnational organized crime and other threats to stability and security, signed in Tashkent this April by the four Central Asian leaders — will promote security and curb the escalation of tension.

Tajikistan is entering a new phase of nation-building. In order to build on the success achieved during the peace process in Tajikistan, the United Nations and the international community have to provide further assistance to the country. We wholeheartedly support the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a post-conflict peace-building office to address the difficult economic and social problems faced by Tajikistan today. In our view, projects for Tajikistan within the framework of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, recently inaugurated at the Eurasian Summit in Almaty, could play an important role in the economic rehabilitation and development of the country.

We appeal to all Member States to continue to render their support to Tajikistan in its reconstruction in the social and economic spheres and in building a stable and prosperous society. Kazakhstan is ready actively to participate in these endeavours.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I would, first of all, like to thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting on the situation in Tajikistan with a view to reviewing the progress achieved by the parties in the peace process and the contribution of the United Nations.

It is heartening to note that the people of Tajikistan have come a long way since 1991 in achieving peace and national reconciliation. For me personally, it is a matter of special satisfaction, having been associated as Secretary-General of a regional cooperation organization, called the Economic Cooperation Organization, with the process of securing the fruits of political independence for the Central Asian republics by leading them on the path of economic resilience and self-reliance. All sides in the conflict deserve commendation for their wisdom and sagacity in choosing the path of peace by abandoning violence and destruction.

Since 1993, the United Nations has played a vital role in encouraging the parties in the conflict to achieve

sustainable peace in Tajikistan. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was in the vanguard in providing the stability that was required to pursue the peace process. Pakistan actively participated in the Mission by providing observers.

Another important area in which we contributed meaningfully was encouraging intra-Tajik dialogue as an observer to the process. Pakistan hosted the third round of talks in Islamabad in October 1994, which enabled the parties to make significant strides as they signed two important documents: the Protocol on the Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement on a Temporary Ceasefire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country, and the joint communiqué on the results of the third round of intra-Tajik peace talks on national reconciliation.

When the parties eventually signed the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord on 27 June 1997, Pakistan agreed to become one of the Guarantor States. In this capacity, we continued to follow all developments in the political dialogue and played a positive role in encouraging the parties to remain on course and to fulfil their commitment to achieve the goals outlined by them in the General Agreement of 1997.

While we fully share the sense of satisfaction being expressed today on the advancement of the peace process in Tajikistan, I must point out here that the report of the Secretary-General which is under consideration of the Council at this meeting does not include any specific reference to Pakistan's contribution. On the other hand, in paragraph 9 of the report, the role of some countries has been recognized. We are not sure whether it is a deliberate omission or an inadvertent error. Whatever may be the case, the absence of recognition of Pakistan's significant role in the report and in any resultant statement raises questions about the objectivity and impartiality of those who are responsible for the preparation of these documents. We hope this is only an oversight and will be rectified.

In any case, Pakistan will continue to contribute to the post-conflict peace-building process in Tajikistan in keeping with our consistent policy and our commitment to the peace and prosperity of the people of Tajikistan, as well as for the entire region. We attach great importance to our relations with all the brotherly Central Asian Republics with whom we have historical bonds rooted in common faith, culture and heritage.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my country's abiding commitment to the consolidation of the peace process in Tajikistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me at the outset to express my thanks to the Secretary-General for the report we have received from him on the situation in Tajikistan. I also thank the Special Representative, Mr. Petrov, for his briefing.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is delighted to witness the successful completion of the peace process and achievement of national reconciliation in Tajikistan by implementation of the main provisions of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord signed by the Tajik parties in 1997. We congratulate them on surmounting obstacles and consequently putting their country back on the road to peace, national reconciliation and development. They should indeed be commended for their belief in the peaceful settlement of the conflict, as well as for the willingness and dedication they demonstrated throughout the negotiations and the transitional period.

Undoubtedly, the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Tajikistan should also be considered a success for regional and international peace-making actors. Sustained efforts under the auspices of the United Nations, accompanied from the beginning by close cooperation and active participation of regional Governments, began to bear fruit in 1994 with the holding of the first round of the inter-Tajik talks in Moscow, followed by the second round in Tehran, resulting in the signing of the ceasefire agreement in the same year.

Likewise, the restoration of peace in Tajikistan will be remembered, I am sure, as one of the great achievements of the United Nations in the latter part of the twentieth century. There is no doubt that the Secretary-General, his successive special envoys and his colleagues in the Secretariat, as well as the men and women who served in the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), who worked in a frequently difficult and hazardous environment, played a decisive and commendable role in bringing about peace in that country. Appreciation goes also to the Security

Council, as well as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peacekeeping forces and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission for their steadfast support given to the peace efforts in Tajikistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the peace mediators and an active member of the Contact Group of Guarantor States and International Organizations, did its best to help maintain political dialogue and create a favourable and conducive environment indispensable for the smooth progress of the inter-Tajik talks. We have spared no effort in helping to solve pressing issues from the very start of the talks, and we hope that the cordial and friendly relations existing between our two Governments and nations, which share many commonalities, will continue to grow steadfastly.

Although great success is at hand in Tajikistan and the country is on the path to a comprehensive and lasting peace, complacency should not be allowed. Due to the remaining root causes of the crisis, the possibility of renewed instability cannot be excluded. Daunting economic and social problems have yet to be addressed. Therefore, we totally agree with the Secretary-General that the international community's continued support in the post-conflict phase will be important for Tajikistan's ability to sustain and build on the achievements of the peace process.

Moreover, the impact of the Afghan crisis, as an external factor, on the still-fragile situation in Tajikistan continues to be a major cause for concern. Afghanistan is an ongoing destabilizing factor, adversely affecting peace and security throughout the region. I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention, once more, to the Afghan problem and appeal to the international community to increase its efforts aimed at putting an end to the regionally destabilizing conflict in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Uzbekistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the post of president of the Security Council for May and to express our confidence in the success of the work of the Council under your skilled guidance. Allow me also to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the preparation and submission of the most recent report on the situation in Tajikistan, and which contains important and relevant assessments of the developments in that country and a view of the United Nations further role in the post-conflict period.

Over the last seven years, the United Nations has been playing an active and important role in the establishment of peace and national accord on the land of Tajikistan, which has been rent by civil war. Staff members working in the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), sometimes under difficult and dangerous conditions, have made efforts to ensure the establishment of peace in that country. We will continue to cherish the sacred memory of those courageous staff members of the Mission who gave their lives in serving the cause of peace in Tajikistan.

The most recent events in the political and public life of Tajikistan clearly show that the country has made substantive progress towards the democratization of its society and the establishment of peace and national reconciliation, as well as towards the establishment of favourable conditions for the rehabilitation of an economy devastated by many years of war. These events represent an important contribution to the implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, which was signed on 27 June 1997.

However, while paying due tribute to the significant progress that has been achieved in the political process, as well as in the implementation of the agreements on the establishment of peace, we believe it necessary to note that a great deal still remains to be done. As an example, we might note that the Protocol on Military Issues — in particular, its provisions on disarmament, demobilization and the reintegration of opposition fighters — has, up to now, not been fully implemented.

We share the view that the continuation of an insecure situation, both within Tajikistan and throughout the Central Asian region, is being promoted by armed elements that are continuing to operate on the territory of Tajikistan and that are not under the control of the Government. We also support the view that, as a result of internal factors and of the continuing unstable situation in the region, in particular in neighbouring Afghanistan, we cannot at present exclude the possible threat of increased instability in the future.

In this regard, we hope that all parties to the peace process in Tajikistan will make all the necessary efforts to bring about the comprehensive and effective

implementation of the agreements for the establishment of peace and national accord.

For these reasons, Uzbekistan welcomes the proposal of Secretary-General Kofi Annan to establish a United Nations office for post-conflict peace-building and the strengthening of peace in Tajikistan.

Uzbekistan, more than any other country, has been directly interested in the speedy cessation of hostilities in brotherly Tajikistan. From the very first days of the conflict, my Government expressed serious concern about the situation in this neighbouring country and made all possible efforts to ensure successful progress in the peace process. This position was based above all on the fact that for many centuries the peoples of Central Asia have had the closest possible spiritual, cultural and socio-economic ties.

Given this situation and the desire to provide direct assistance to international efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the Tajik conflict, Uzbekistan became a member of the Contact Group, which was founded at the request of the Tajik parties in order to observe the implementation of the General Agreement and to render specialized assistance, consultative help and good offices.

Within the framework of its activities as part of that group, and as one of the Guarantor States, Uzbekistan sent food products, medicines and essential goods to Tajikistan; it provided as much assistance as possible to help refugees return to their homes; and it provided other needed humanitarian assistance.

Within the framework of international efforts undertaken under the aegis of the United Nations, the Republic of Uzbekistan actively participated in the drafting and adoption of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and, on an ongoing basis, co-sponsored these resolutions. Uzbekistan also consistently welcomed and supported Security Council resolutions and presidential statements concerning the situation in Tajikistan.

Today, Uzbekistan would like once again to reaffirm its readiness to continue to provide support for the peaceful and stable development of Tajikistan. This commitment was already noted in the statement of the Contact Group of 18 April of this year.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Turkmenistan. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of your very important post and to wish you further success.

My delegation would like to express its gratitude to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his contribution to the achievement of peace in Tajikistan and for how the United Nations is approaching the post-conflict period. We would also like to thank Mr. Ivo Petrov for his effective work as representative of the Secretary-General.

We hold a very high opinion of the United Nations efforts to achieve peace and national accord in Tajikistan. We welcome the success achieved by all the parties in this laborious process, which is of enormous significance for our region.

The long-suffering people of Tajikistan finally have an opportunity to undertake the restoration of the country, to redress the consequences of the war and to begin a new stage of socio-economic development. We wish the people of Tajikistan peace and prosperity. In emphasizing the significance of the outcome achieved, we would like to emphasize the equally important need to reinforce this outcome, this being one of the links in a chain of measures to establish peace in the region and to bring about its development. In this context, we support the proposal of Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the establishment and functioning of a United Nations office for post-conflict peace-building and democracy in Tajikistan. We also call for comprehensive support for the peace process in Tajikistan by the international community.

The work of the United Nations in Tajikistan — together with that of the Commission on National Reconciliation, the Tajik parties, the Guarantor States and international organizations — has demonstrated the real effectiveness of the joint efforts to implement the General Agreement and political dialogue. This experience can serve as the basis for the peaceful solution of conflicts in other countries.

Turkmenistan, which is committed to all the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations, took an active part in achieving peace in Tajikistan, by participating in the negotiating processes and as a member of the Contact Group. Once again, we welcome the achievement of success in the peace process in Tajikistan and reaffirm our intention to promote actively

the consolidation of peace in this country and in the region as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of this item will take place immediately following the adjournment of this meeting.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.